

KC Weed News – April 2007

(<http://dnr.metrokc.gov/Weeds/kcweednews.htm>)

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Weed of the Month: Yellow Archangel (*Lamium galeobdolon*), Class C Non-Designated Noxious Weed

(http://dnr.metrokc.gov/wlr/lands/weeds/yellow_archangel.htm)

Our featured weed this month is becoming one of the plants I get the most questions about, either because it is causing a nuisance for someone or because it has mysteriously shown up someplace unexpected. I suspect it also gets lots of attention because of its distinctive leaves and its tendency to grow in dense, unbroken patches that call out for attention. The silver and green leaves and dense, sprawling growth are part of yellow archangel's attraction as an ornamental in shady beds or hanging baskets. Unfortunately, this is not a plant that stays where it is placed. Time and time again, yellow archangel has shown its ability to sneak away from a planting bed or discarded hanging basket and spread thickly into a nearby forest or ravine.-

I have heard of and personally seen numerous examples of yellow archangel sprawling out of yard waste piles or flower beds and into the surrounding woodlands. The first time I saw yellow archangel was just this kind of situation. In the spring of 2000, a homeowner from the Ames Lake area asked for help identifying a plant that was spreading from a small pile of garden clippings she had left in the woods and taking over her forest. Sure enough it was yellow archangel. She had tried to pull it all up from a front garden bed, piled it up out back, and then returned later to find it growing out into the woods. Meanwhile, the area she had pulled was persistently coming back from small roots and stems left behind. I ran into the same homeowner last year and after about 6 years of hand-pulling most of the yellow archangel was gone, although there were still plants showing up occasionally.

This first homeowner's experience was enough to alert us to the potential invasiveness of this plant, but it did take several years of observations and gathering testimonials before it became clear that this was a candidate for noxious weed designation. For example, one homeowner east of Renton described how her native woodland flowers disappeared over a few years as

yellow archangel took over in the forest near her house. What really concerned us was that yellow archangel was spreading into forests, not only urban and disturbed areas, but also high quality woodland areas with fairly intact native plant communities. Now that yellow archangel has been classified officially as a noxious weed in Washington State, our goal is to spread the word to gardeners everywhere to avoid introducing this plant near natural areas and to keep it contained where it is already growing. Also, it is our hope that infestations in natural areas will become a higher priority for removal by public agencies and land managers before they become too widespread to control. I was pleased to hear recently that the City of Kirkland will be using volunteers to remove the rather intimidating patch of archangel in their Watershed Park.

Yellow archangel goes by several other names. Its Latin name according to the USDA Plants Database is *Lamiastrum galeobdolon*, but you will also find it called *Lamium galeobdolon* or *Galeobdolon luteum*. Common names that it goes by include simply Lamium, golden dead-nettle, and, most interestingly, weasel-snout. The plants we see escape are all variegated although there is some disagreement about what exact species or variety this is or whether the non-variegated varieties of the same species would be invasive if they were given the opportunities that the silvery-leaved one has. It is best to avoid all varieties of the species, variegated or not, at least here in the Pacific Northwest, until we have more information.

For pictures and information about yellow archangel, there are several good resources on the internet, including the [State Weed Board's Written Findings](#), [Paul Graham's web site on southwestern B.C. invasives](#), [Arthur Lee Jacobson's website](#), and our own [yellow archangel web page](#) and our [fact sheet on ID and control](#). The information available is still somewhat limited but fortunately Wendy DesCamp, a graduate student at the University of Washington, is researching this plant and will have more detailed information in the coming year or so. Also, I have heard that Tim Miller at WSU Extension will be starting some control trials soon in order to improve our technical information on how to control this plant.

If you have had any experiences with this plant, I am very interested in hearing about it, especially successes or problems with different control methods. Also, I am collecting locations of where this plant is growing un-invited, so please let us know about any locations you see in King County, especially if you notice it growing in an alarming way or in a remote natural area. Although control is not required for this non-designate noxious weed in King County, we are gathering information on distribution and impacts and would like to encourage people to remove it when it is threatening natural habitat. You can call us at 206-296-0290, send an email to sasha.shaw@metrokc.gov or use our online infestation form <http://dnr.metrokc.gov/weeds/Infestations-Form.cfm>.

Weed Tips for April

Check pastures for toxic weeds. Animals will be more likely to graze poisonous plants if the grasses are still too short or sparse so check fields before setting animals out. Look for rosettes of [tansy ragwort](#), [milk thistle](#), and [poison-hemlock](#) and control them before letting the animals graze. For information on other poisonous pasture plants, contact your local extension office or conservation district. A handy summary of poisonous plants in western Washington can be found on our brochures page: <http://dnr.metrokc.gov/weeds/brochures.htm>.

Watch out for [giant hogweed](#) in urban areas, parks, and anywhere else it has been spotted in the past. Check the noxious weed map for King County to see if it has been seen in your area (<http://dnr.metrokc.gov/wlr/lands/weeds/maps.htm>). Hogweed's large, jagged leaves and thick, purple-blotched stems should be tall enough to spot emerging above most other plants now and the plants will be easier to manage before they get full grown. Look for small seedlings and

immature plants around the more obvious mature plants but be sure not to confuse non-native giant hogweed with similar native species [cow parsnip](#) and [coltsfoot](#), also about the same size right now. Digging up hogweed this time of year isn't too difficult, but be sure to use caution to avoid getting the sap on your skin because it can cause painful blisters and scarring. [Contact our program](#) if you find this plant in a new location in the county.

April showers bring more than May flowers – disturbed areas in lawns, pastures, woods, and other places will fill in with seedlings of annual and biennial weeds like [herb Robert](#) and [bull thistle](#). Spreading perennials like [Canada thistle](#) and [spotted knapweed](#) will move in quickly as well. Walk trails, fields and yards to spot trouble areas that will need re-seeding or mulch to keep back weeds.

Catch weeds that are starting to flower. When a plant turns to flower production it's a good sign that the roots are depleted and vulnerable. And waiting until seeds form will make it hard to control plants without spreading seeds. In late March, [Scotch broom](#) started to bud and will flower during April. [Gorse](#) was already flowering in most places by March and will continue through April. Keep your eyes out for the fragrant yellow flower clusters on large, spiny bushes. Expect to find gorse along coastal areas and in forests on well-drained soils. This is a good time to control both of these plants and the easiest time to find them. Also, [Garlic mustard](#) is up and will be flowering throughout April (some plants have already started to flower!), so check out likely places for returning plants and be sure to contact our program if you find any new populations of garlic mustard!

Control [English ivy](#) before the berries mature and while the soil is loose and soft. English ivy is easiest to find now before deciduous trees have fully leafed-out. Just be careful around storm-damaged trees – never pull ivy down from the upper parts of a tree since this might injure the tree and will most certainly injure you if branches fall off. Just pry the vines off the bark of the tree up to where you can comfortably reach and all the way down to the ground.

Volunteer for Earth Day Pulling Invasive Weeds

This is a great time to pull weeds in parks – not too cold and not too hot, the soil is still nice and loose, and there are lots of events to choose from. Earth Day is on a Saturday this year – April 21 – so the timing is perfect. This is also a great way to meet people who are also really concerned about invasives and helping out our local natural areas! For a great Earth Day event with both fun and work, check out [Earth Day with Duwamish Alive!](#) sponsored by People for Puget Sound (and lots of other organizations and agencies). The City of Seattle has declared the whole month of April as Earth Month so check out [Seattle's 2007 Earth Month Events](#) for lots of great activities. In Kirkland, check out the work parties at the [Green Kirkland webpage](#) (including two Earth Day events!). For volunteering in King County Parks, check out [The Dirt: Calendar of Hands on Volunteer Activities](#). For volunteer events all along the Mountains to Sound Greenway, check out the [Greenway Trust Volunteer Events Calendar](#). Two more great resources for volunteer events are [EarthCorps' Volunteer Calendar](#) and [Cascade Land Conservancy's Events Calendar](#). For volunteering in your city, contact your local parks department for work parties – there's always lots to do this time of year!

Weed Program Booths on Earth Day – April 21

- **Shoreline Natural Yard Care Fair**, Central Market, 155th & Aurora, 9-3
- **Lake Forest Park Green Fair**, Third Place Commons in the Lake Forest Park Towne Centre, 17171 Bothell Way, 9-2

Noxious Weed Seminars for Professionals

The noxious weed program will once again offer two workshops for vegetation management crews and others who need to identify and manage noxious weeds as part of their work. Using live specimens and slides, we will focus on how to identify and control noxious weeds that are designated for control in King County. In addition, we will have a guest speaker on the topic of strategies to reduce herbicide use through non-chemical weed control methods. We have applied for WSDA pesticide recertification credits for both of these classes. See our [workshops schedule](#) for a more detailed agenda.

- **North King County Session: May 8, 8:00am-12:00pm, Kenmore**
- **South King County Session: May 9, 8:00am-12:00pm, Kent**

To register and receive updates on the class agenda, please contact Sasha Shaw at 206-263-6468 or sasha.shaw@metrokc.gov. Please feel free to pass this information on to others who may be interested as well. Both classes are free and open to the public.

Upcoming Invasive Weed Workshops

- **Ornamentals Gone Bad, May 19, 1pm-2pm, [Furney's Nursery](#), 21215 Pacific Hwy S, Des Moines, WA 98198**
- **Renton Weed Workshop, May 24, 6:30pm-8:00pm, Renton Senior Center, 211 Burnett Avenue N**
- **Snoqualmie/North Bend Weed Workshop, June 5, 7pm-8:30pm, Meadowbrook Farm Interpretive Center, on Boalch Ave NW between Snoqualmie and North Bend**
- **Seattle Backyard Invasives, June 21, 7pm-8:30pm, Northgate Community Center, 10510 5th Ave NE, Seattle, phone 206-386-4283 to register.**
- **Burien Backyard Invasives, June 27, 6:30pm-8pm, Burien Community Center, 425 SW 144th St., Burien.**
- **Lewis Creek Park Invasives Weed Walk and Talk, July 7, 1pm-3pm, [Lewis Creek Park Interpretive Center](#), 5808 Lakemont Blvd, Bellevue**

2006 Annual Report of the King County Noxious Weed Board

2006 was a busy year for the program with 8,176 noxious weed infestations visited by our weed specialists, including 726 new populations found by road surveys, public agencies, helpful neighbors and concerned citizens. One of the main priorities of the Board is to find and eradicate Class A weeds. We are pleased to report that we stopped seed production on 98% of all Class A weed sites and have eliminated 66% of the area covered by Class A weeds found since the program started work in 1996. Our containment of Class B-designate weeds is also going well with 84% of those sites controlled in 2006 and a decrease in area covered of 17%. The data is helpful in tracking our results and showing us areas that need more work (and you will certainly find lots of data and charts in our report). However, the real successes of our program are harder to measure – the enthusiasm of citizens working with us to stop noxious weeds and the dedication of so many agency staff and each one of our own staff to keep working on such an overwhelming problem, knowing that they are having a real impact even though the day-to-day challenges can seem overwhelming. It is our mission to work towards a healthy environment free from the degrading impacts of noxious weeds. We believe we are making progress every year toward that vision and that our report shows that progress. If you would like a paper copy of the annual report, please contact Suzanne Rowe at 206-296-0290 or Suzanne.rowe@metrokc.gov. For the online version and for the detailed appendices, please visit our website at <http://dnr.metrokc.gov/weeds>.

Staff News – Meet the 2007 Weed Crew

The 2007 weed season has begun and the [King County Noxious Weed Program](#) is fully staffed once again. Our seasonal regional weed specialists are already heading out to the field to track down high priority Class A and B noxious weeds and to work with landowners and property managers to get these problem plants controlled. Each specialist is assigned a region of the county that includes both incorporated and unincorporated areas. Our program is very fortunate to have a crew of highly motivated weed specialists who enjoy talking to people and helping them to find answers to their noxious weed problems. If you would like to meet your regional weed specialist, please do not hesitate to call our program at 206-296-0290 or send them an email at noxious.weeds@metrokc.gov.

1. **Karen Peterson:** North Seattle, Shoreline, Lake Forest Park, Kenmore, Bothell, Woodinville
2. **Frances Lucero:** Kirkland, Redmond, Sammamish, Fall City, Carnation, Duvall, Skykomish
3. **Monica Walker:** Central and East Seattle, Mercer Island, Knotweed Project Manager
4. **Maria Winkler:** West Seattle and Harbor Island, Vashon Island
5. **Jessica McKenney:** Tukwila, Burien, SeaTac, Normandy Park, Des Moines, Federal Way, western Kent
6. **Sarah Baker:** Bellevue, Newcastle, Medina, Hunts Point, Yarrow Point, Clyde Hill, Renton, Snoqualmie, North Bend
7. **Matt Below:** eastern Kent, Covington, Maple Valley, Black Diamond
8. **Trish MacLaren:** Auburn, Milton, Algona, Pacific, Enumclaw

We also have three weed specialists who work year round throughout the county. They can be reached at our program line 206-296-0290 or directly by email:

- **Katie Messick**, Aquatic Weed Specialist, katie.messick@metrokc.gov
- **Dennis Chambreau**, State/Federal Lands Specialist, dennis.chambreau@metrokc.gov
- **Roy Brunskill**, County Lands Specialist, roy.brunskill@metrokc.gov

And finally, for information on the Weed Board, program business, educational activities or general weed questions, please contact:

- **Steve Burke**, Program Manager, 206-205-6927, steve-j.burke@metrokc.gov
- **Sasha Shaw**, Education Specialist, 206-263-6468, sasha.shaw@metrokc.gov
- **Suzanne Rowe**, Administrative Specialist, 206-296-0442, suzanne.rowe@metrokc.gov

Permit Update for Aquatic Weed Control

In Washington State, NPDES permits will continue to be used to regulate the use of pesticides in water as they have been in the past. Also, the current permit held by Washington State Department of Agriculture for noxious weed control in water will be in place until the new one is issued later this year. That means, in practical terms, that the permit process for noxious weed control in and near water will be the same as last year for the current weed season at least.

The background to this update is that, first, the [NPDES noxious weed control permit](http://agr.wa.gov/plantsinsects/weeds/npdespermits/default.htm) (<http://agr.wa.gov/plantsinsects/weeds/npdespermits/default.htm>) held by WSDA is up for renewal and will expire in May. This is the coverage agencies and other applicators would usually need for controlling purple loosestrife, knotweed along riverbanks, and other emergent shoreline and wetland weeds. The review process for this permit renewal is still underway so

the current permit will be in effect for this weed season. This means that agencies and other groups can still go online and request coverage for aquatic noxious weed control under this permit. The process is very convenient and there is no cost for the coverage so this is definitely good news for noxious weed control. Of course, a WSDA licensed applicator with the aquatic endorsement needs to be applying the herbicide or directly supervising the applicators in the field.

Secondly, in November 2006, the EPA issued a ruling that pesticides applied according to their Federal label are not a pollutant under the Clean Water Act and so they are not subject to NPDES permitting (National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System). This ruling is being appealed in multiple district courts. In response to this ruling, the Washington State Department of Ecology met with a wide range of interest groups and the majority of them requested that the state continue its current permitting program, pending the outcome of the EPA rule appeal. For more information on this decision see Ecology's paper [Focus on State's Response to EPA Rule on Aquatic Pesticide Permitting](#).

The result of this decision is that the Department of Ecology will continue to issue the [Aquatic Plant Control Permit](#) (<http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wg/pesticides/index.html>) for both private and public projects. This permit is required when pesticides will be applied in water to control submersed and floating noxious weeds, nuisance plants and algae. This applies to both private and public pesticide applicators and the permit is obtained by the applicator themselves, not by a sponsoring agency or organization. This permit is not required for emergent plants such as purple loosestrife or yellow flag iris, however it can cover control of emergents as part of a lake-wide project if the project also includes submersed or floating plants such as milfoil or water lily.

For more information on the state permits, please contact Kelly McLain, Aquatic Pesticide Specialist, at 360-407-6938 or kelm461@ecy.wa.gov. For more information on aquatic noxious weed control in King County, please call Katie Messick or Steve Burke at 206-296-0290.

2008 Noxious Weed List Proposals Requested

The Washington State Noxious Weed Board is accepting proposals through the end of this month to change the Washington State Noxious Weed List for 2008. This includes additions of new weeds, changes in required control area designations, and removal of any species. You can contact us for information on working through the [King County Noxious Weed Board](#) or send your proposals directly to the State Weed Board. For details on the listing process and how you can participate, please see the state website: http://www.nwcb.wa.gov/weed_list/weed_listing_process.htm. You can also contact our office for more information on how to get involved with the weed listing process by calling 206-296-0290 or emailing Steve Burke at steve-j.burke@metrokc.gov.

Hikers and Fishermen: Important First Defense against Weeds

Reading an article about noxious weeds in Wyoming, I was reminded of the ways we can all help get a jump on noxious weeds invading in our own wilderness and backcountry areas. The first story involves a hiker in the Bridger-Teton National Forest near Jackson, Wyoming. This hiker was aware of what noxious weeds to look for and luckily discovered a pioneering infestation of [leafy spurge](#) (<http://dnr.metrokc.gov/wlr/lands/weeds/lfysprg.htm>) in a remote area rarely visited by anyone. Thanks to the early detection by this hiker, the local weed control district was able to quickly respond and eliminate the population before it spread. The second story is an ongoing effort by the same weed control district in Teton County to enlist the help of fishermen and rafting guides to spot pioneering infestations of key noxious weeds along the

Snake River. Even though the weed district staff survey the river themselves twice a year, they still miss many infestations. The help from fishermen is invaluable in spotting small, isolated patches of noxious weeds that are tough to spot as you are rushing down the river. In addition, weeds often come in with camping and fishing equipment, so the fishermen and guides also provide great help by checking and cleaning equipment and watching for weeds in the areas they visit regularly. As winter turns to spring here in King County, and plants are once again visible in the backcountry where we hike and fish, let's all keep an eye out for new patches of noxious weeds. If you see something you think is a [noxious weed](#), take pictures and a sample (in a well-sealed bag of course) and send them to a weed expert or the park ranger for the area. And, of course, make sure you provide detailed directions on how to get back to that location! You can always start with us if you don't know where else to go – just call 206-296-0290 or email me at sasha.shaw@metrokc.gov. If you would like to know what weeds to look for, check out our website: <http://dnr.metrokc.gov/wlr/lands/weeds/index.htm> or come to one of our free weed workshops described above and at <http://dnr.metrokc.gov/wlr/lands/weeds/classes.htm>.